

## REPORT TO THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

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DATE ISSUED: August 3, 2023

MEETING DATE: August 16, 2023 AGENDA 6  
 ITEM:

PROJECT NUMBER: PRJ2023-001628

PROJECT NAME: Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD)  
 Amendment

PLAN NUMBER RPPL2023002314

SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT(S): 2

PROPERTY LOCATION: Unincorporated portion of the Inglewood Oil Field

INVESTIGATING PLANNER: Edgar De La Torre, Senior Planner  
 edelatorre@planning.lacounty.gov

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

LA County Planning staff (staff) recommends that the Regional Planning Commission (Commission) adopt the attached resolution recommending approval to the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors of the Baldwin Hills CSD Amendment, Plan No. RPPL2023002314.

Staff recommends the following motion:

**I MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING AND FIND THAT THE EXEMPTIONS QUALIFY PURSUANT TO STATE AND LOCAL CEQA GUIDELINES.**

**I ALSO MOVE THAT THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION ADOPT THE ATTACHED RESOLUTION RECOMMENDING APPROVAL TO THE COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE BALDWIN HILLS COMMUNITY STANDARDS DISTRICT AMENDMENT, PLAN NO. RPPL2023002314.**

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

### **A. Summary**

Plan Number RPPL2023002314 is the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (CSD) Amendment (Amendment), a project that amends Title 22 (Planning and Zoning) of the Los Angeles County Code to prohibit new oil wells and productions facilities and allows existing oil wells and production facilities to continue operating under a nonconforming status within the boundaries of the Baldwin Hills CSD. The Amendment will maintain all stringent regulations for the existing oil wells and productions facilities during the amortization period. The Amendment (Exhibit A), Draft RPC Resolution (Exhibit B), and Notice of Exemption (Exhibit C) are attached to this report.

### **B. Background**

The Baldwin Hills CSD was adopted by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors (Board) on October 28, 2008. The Baldwin Hills CSD established additional development standards and operating procedures for oil and gas operations within the unincorporated portion of the Inglewood Oil Field. The main purpose of the CSD is to ensure that the operations are conducted in a safe manner with minimum impacts to the surrounding communities to protect the comfort, health, safety, and general welfare of these communities. As part of the Baldwin Hills CSD, a Community Advisory Panel (CAP) was established to foster communication between the County, the operator, and community representatives about the ongoing operations at the oil field. The CAP continues to meet monthly.

The Department of Regional Planning, through the Baldwin Hills CSD, is responsible for land use and zoning regulations for the unincorporated portion of the Inglewood Oil Field. In addition, there are numerous federal, state, regional, and local agencies that regulate the oil wells and production facilities at the Inglewood Oil Field. A summary of regulatory agencies and regulations is attached to this report for your Commission's information (Exhibit D).

On September 15, 2021, the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors approved a motion titled "Protecting Communities Near Oil and Gas Drilling Operations in Los Angeles County." The motion directs the Department of Regional Planning (Department) to: "prohibit all new oil and gas extraction wells in all zones, including those allowed or planned for under existing discretionary permits, and designate all existing oil and gas extraction activities, including those allowed or planned for under existing discretionary permits, as legal nonconforming uses in all zones." In addition, the motion also directs the Department to: "update the Baldwin Hills Community Standards District (which expires in 2028) to be consistent with the final updates to Title 22 Zoning Code for new and existing oil and gas extraction activities." The countywide Oil Well Ordinance was adopted January 24, 2023. The Amendment makes the Baldwin Hills CSD consistent with the countywide Oil Well Ordinance. It also implements the Board's vision to prioritize and protect the public health, safety, and welfare of residents living near oil wells and begin the process of a just transition away from fossil fuels and decarbonization of the economy.

The Board also approved two related motions on September 15, 2021 titled: “Developing an Oil Well Cleanup Pilot Program for Los Angeles County” and “Developing a Comprehensive Strategy for a Just Transition Away from Fossil Fuels for Los Angeles County.” The three motions assigned several County agencies, including Office of Oil and Gas at Public Works, Department of Public Health, Fire Department, and the Chief Sustainability Officer, to work on these directives. All three motions are attached to this report (Exhibit E).

### **C. Location**

The Amendment affects all the oil wells within the Baldwin Hills CSD boundary, which encompasses the unincorporated portions of the Inglewood Oil Field. A map of the Baldwin Hills CSD boundary is attached to this report (Exhibit F). According to California Department of Conservation, Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM), there are 819 active and idle wells within the Baldwin Hills CSD boundary.

### **D. Major Elements and Key Components**

The Amendment has three major elements and key components:

#### Prohibit New Oil Wells and Production Facilities

The Amendment removes all provisions in the CSD that allow new oil wells and production facilities within the Baldwin Hills CSD boundary.

#### Make Existing Oil Wells and Production Facilities Nonconforming Due to Use

In prohibiting new oil wells and production facilities within the Baldwin Hills CSD boundary, the Amendment clarifies that the existing legally established oil wells and production facilities are allowed to continue to operate under a nonconforming status. Chapter 22.172 (Nonconforming Uses, Buildings and Structures) contains regulations for nonconforming uses and provides that nonconforming uses shall be discontinued and removed from their sites within 20 years of becoming nonconforming.

#### Maintain Baldwin Hills CSD provisions for Existing Oil Wells and Productions Facilities

The Amendment maintains regulations in the Baldwin Hills CSD for the existing oil wells and production facilities, including but not limited to complaints logs, requirements for site maintenance, bonds for existing operation, and requirements for well plugging and abandonment and restoration.

### **E. General Plan Consistency**

The Amendment is consistent with and supportive of the goals, policies, and principles of the General Plan, including:

- Policy LU 7.1: Reduce and mitigate the impacts of incompatible land uses, where feasible, using buffers and other design techniques.

- Policy LU 7.8: Promote environmental justice in the areas bearing disproportionate impacts from stationary pollution sources.
- Policy LU 9.1: Promote community health for all neighborhoods.
- Policy LU 9.4: Encourage patterns of development that protect the health of sensitive receptors.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS**

The project is exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and County CEQA Guidelines pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15061(b)(3), 15061(b)(2), 15301 (Class 1), and 15308 (Class 8). Staff recommends that your Commission find the project exempt from CEQA and the County CEQA Guidelines. A Notice of Exemption was prepared for the project (Exhibit C).

## **OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT**

### **A. County Department Comments and Recommendations**

The Fire Department, Public Works, Public Health, and Department of Parks and Recreation reviewed the Amendment. Staff received comments from the Fire Department and Public Health and incorporated their comments in the Amendment.

### **B. Project Outreach and Engagement**

On January 26, 2023, staff attended the Baldwin Hills CSD – Community Advisory Panel (CAP) Meeting to present on the Amendment and continued to provide updates at each of the following monthly meetings. On July 13, 2023, staff emailed 295 stakeholders to announce that the Amendment is available for review and that a public hearing is scheduled for August 16, 2023. Pursuant to Chapter 22.244 (Ordinance Amendments) and Section 22.222.180 of the County Code, the notice of public hearing was published in two local newspapers. Amendment materials were posted on the Department's website and promoted through social media. Furthermore, the Department provided translated project summary sheets in Spanish and Chinese (Exhibit F).

Of the numerous directives in the three motions adopted by the Board on September 15, 2021, this Amendment implements one aspect of one motion. There are future opportunities for community engagement as the County agencies continue to work on implementing all three Board motions.

### **C. Public Comments**

At the time of this report, staff had received 7 email/comment letters from individuals living near the Inglewood Oil Field. All these letters were in support of "a quick and just transition." In addition, staff had also received 1 email/comment letter against the amendment. The email/comment letters are attached to this report (Exhibit G).

## **ATTACHMENTS**

LIST OF ATTACHED EXHIBITS	
EXHIBIT A	Baldwin Hills CSD Amendment
EXHIBIT B	Draft RPC Resolution
EXHIBIT C	Notice of Exemption
EXHIBIT D	Summary of Regulatory Agencies
EXHIBIT E	September 15, 2021 Board Motions
EXHIBIT F	Baldwin Hills CSD Map
EXHIBIT G	Project Summaries (English, Spanish, and Chinese)
EXHIBIT H	Public Comments

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Reviewed By:

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Alex Garcia, Assistant Deputy Director

Report

Approved By:

  
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Connie Chung, Deputy Director